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Women leaders in Montana government.
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WOMEN LEADERS
IN MONTANA GOVERNMENT

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Message from Governor Stan Stephens...

***WOMEN** have learned that they can have a powerful voice in public issues by working within the halls of government. More and more women are running for office, seeking appointments to public boards and commissions, and applying for competitive positions within Montana government. Armed with impressive qualifications and working backgrounds, women are beginning to take their rightful places in government.*

In the last legislative election, the number of Montana women lawmakers rose to thirty-one, representing one-fifth of the membership. Two women currently occupy statewide elected office. Montana's judicial system has a woman Supreme Court Justice and a woman District Judge. Two major state departments, Social and Rehabilitation Services and Natural Resources and Conservation, are administered by women. The Departments of Corrections and Human Services and Revenue have women Deputy Directors. The Administrator of Montana's Travel Promotion Division and our Indian Affairs Coordinator are female, as are our Commissioner of Political Practices and head of the Montana Lottery. Four well-qualified and highly effective women sit on my Cabinet of Advisors.

By the end of 1990, 47% of state government's 11,030 workers were women. Forty-two percent of those in official/administrator, professional, and technician categories were female.

More Montana women than ever are directing or influencing state policy through their positions on boards and panels. Since 1989, female participation on public panels has increased from approximately twenty percent to nearly thirty percent. For the first time in Montana history the Board of Natural Resources and Conservation is chaired by a woman, and a woman is serving on the Fish and Game Commission.

The criteria we use for selecting Montanans to serve in appointed positions have resulted in the participation of more and more of Montana's women in shaping our state's future. I look for qualified, skilled people with good ideas and an understanding of how to get things done, people interested in working together to serve Montanans and to make Montana a better place.

This publication highlights only a few of the women who help operate our state government. There are many more. We regret that we can't profile them all, but the women's stories we do present are representative of the dynamic, knowledgeable, effective leadership Montana's women are providing the taxpaying public. ■

"These women provide dynamic, knowledgeable, effective leadership."

—*Governor Stan Stephens*

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"State government has always had a lot of women employees, but they've mostly been in clerical jobs. I've tried hard to change that."

—Andrea Bennett

Re-elected in 1988 to a second four-year term

ANDREA BENNETT

MONTANA STATE AUDITOR

In the fall of 1984 Andrea "Andy" Bennett was elected the first woman Montana State Auditor. A former three-term state legislator, Bennett sponsored legislation involving the State Auditor's office and felt familiar with the position. When the incumbent stepped down from the Auditor's Office in 1981, Bennett successfully ran for the post. In 1988 she ran unopposed for reelection to a second four-year term.

As State Auditor, Bennett actually serves Montanans in three different capacities: Commissioner of Insurance, Commissioner of Securities, and Director of State Payroll.

"Although the job is really quite different than I expected, I love it. New and different things happen continually, from changing interpretation of the law to the use of a statute I've not applied before. The work is very diverse.

"Out of the seventy-five people in my agency, there are over all fewer women employees than before I took office, but more women in higher level positions. State government has always had a lot of women employees, but they've mostly been in clerical jobs. I've tried hard to change that."

Andy has always kept her goals, both short term and long term, in writing. She sets her goals high and finds herself exceeding those goals regularly. "I continually learn more and more about the industries I regulate, about people and governing overall."

Bennett has been an active player in the issue of non-gender insurance in Montana. She supported the bill in the 1983 Legislature, then implemented it into law when she took office as the State Auditor. "Equality means to level the playing field, and I feel that non-gender insurance does that. In the office itself, I try to be a leader and a capable administrator who is continually concerned about fairness at all levels in all issues."

"Women govern with sensitivity. We look at human issues and tend to take a team approach, knowing that no one person has all the answers."

—Nancy Keenan

Elected in 1988 to a four-year term

NANCY KEENAN

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Creating partnerships to involve citizens in education and provide opportunities for Montana children is the goal of State Superintendent of Public Instruction Nancy Keenan.

The superintendent's position is one of two elected posts in Montana requiring a college degree. The other is Attorney General. The superintendent's job requires an education degree with at least three years teaching experience. Keenan has her education degree, 13 years experience teaching, and she served three terms in the Montana State Legislature.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction administers a $600 million budget, works with 535 school districts, and manages a staff of 126 people. Eleven of Keenan's fifteen personal staff are women and she believes that has some advantages. "Women govern with sensitivity. We look at human issues and tend to take a team approach, knowing that no one person has all the answers."

Keenan strives to keep everyone working toward the same end. "My goal is to give every child equal opportunity in education, to make sure every child is prepared for tomorrow's fast-changing world. To accomplish this, we must change the classroom. Today's world is different than yesterday's, but education isn't. We still put kids in rows, give them paper, pencils, and a book. I want to move Montana teaching tools and methods into the 21st century. For instance, through the Montana Educational Telecommunications Network, every school will be linked to computer modems via telephone lines and will be able to receive satellite programming from all over the world."

Keenan is excited about the future. "I've got my feet wet, and now it's time to swim. I love what I'm doing, and I want to do this for at least four more years. After that, I might like to work for private industry in education and technology, or finish my masters and

teach at the university level where there's opportunity to deliberate national issues." Keenan was working toward a Master's degree when she decided to run for Superintendent. "This job has been a real education in itself."

KARLA GRAY

ASSOCIATE JUSTICE OF THE MONTANA SUPREME COURT

On March 4, 1991, Karla Gray was sworn in as Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court.

She was appointed by Governor Stephens to fill a vacancy on the state's high court and she has announced her candidacy for the position in the 1992 election.

Karla entered law school in the early 1970's with a B.A. degree in liberal arts, a Masters in African History, and experience as a police matron in the San Francisco Bay Area. A native of Michigan, she came to Butte to serve as law clerk for U. S. District Judge W. D. Murray in 1976, fell in love with Montana, and stayed. Over the years she has had her own law practice, worked with Atlantic Richfield and Montana Power Company and lobbied the Montana State Legislature in one capacity or another from 1981 through 1989. She has also served on the Board of Directors for both the Montana Trial Lawyers and Montana Defense Lawyers.

A high energy woman who likes dealing with a wide range of issues, she enjoys constant challenge and a fast pace. "Being an Associate Justice doesn't require much physical action, but the mental pace is phenomenal. Because each case is different, you have to shift gears constantly.

"In this job you need to concentrate on the facts and the law before you. You follow where the law leads you without regard to who is involved. You deal with cases as cases, and determine what the law requires. What I think or my opinion of the wisdom behind the law has no bearing."

Karla notes that, although Montana women may not be as far along as we'd like, since she came here fifteen years ago there has been a lot of change. There are women role models where there didn't use to be, and she spoke of the court appointed Gender Fairness Task Force. The Task Force, appointed in 1990, is researching to what extent, if any, gender bias exists in the judicial system and, if it exists, will recommend ways to minimize or eliminate it.

"Being an Associate Justice doesn't require much physical action but the mental pace is phenomenal."

—Karla Gray

DOROTHY McCARTER

DISTRICT JUDGE FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

District Judge Dorothy McCarter's reassuring manner, even temperament, and genuine liking for people create an atmosphere that makes a court appearance less stressful. Reducing tension in the courtroom means a better experience for lawyers and their clients and tends to help Judge McCarter learn the facts of a case quickly.

Appointed by Governor Stephens in the fall of 1989, McCarter is one of 36 district judges serving Montana. Her district encompasses Lewis & Clark and Broadwater counties. "I handle felonies and misdemeanors, and civil litigation including divorce and probate. I hear appeals from City, Justice, and Small Claims Courts. And, I handle a lot of State cases such as appeals of administrative decisions made by state agency boards."

McCarter promotes gender equity by the way she treats people who come into her court. "I am conscientious about equal treatment of men and women in my court, but I get so caught up in the legal issues that I don't pay much attention to gender. But sometimes the children do. One child remarked to his mother, "It's a girl judge!" After an adoption hearing I let the five-year-old boy sit at my bench and play with the gavel. He came down awestruck and asked, "Are there boy judges, too?"

"I am conscientious about equal treatment of men and women in my court, but I get so caught up in the legal issues that I don't pay much attention to gender."

—Dorothy McCarter

"We've expanded opportunities for promotion to all our people and provide everyone with the resources, tools, and training they need to succeed."

—*Julia Robinson*

McCarter will have to run for election in 1992 and, if she wins, again in 1994 when the vacant term she filled expires. After that, the post is up for election every six years. She says it's hard for a judge to campaign for office. "We're required to be impartial; we're not allowed to comment on cases. We can't support political candidates or be active in partisan events. I can campaign for fairness, impartiality and temperament, but can't talk about substantive issues. An opponent who is not a judge can comment about anything without concern for violating judicial conduct."

JULIA ROBINSON

DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND REHABILITATION SERVICES

Julia Robinson is one of those people who turns concepts and ideas into reality. In 1976, with a Masters degree in sociology, she landed a position as Executive Director for the Wyoming Association of Retarded Citizens, where she was to start preschool programs for handicapped children.

When the Wyoming Legislature told her 'since they weren't seeing any children with special needs, there must not be any,' Julia proved differently. The next session she gained full legislative support for a statewide system of handicapped preschool programs in Wyoming.

When Governor Stephens appointed her as Director of the Montana Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services in 1989, Julia assumed leadership of the largest agency budget and the third largest agency staff in Montana state government. SRS has over 900 employees, a combined state and federally funded budget of $386 million, and serves around 100,000 Montanans per year.

Since Julia took the helm at SRS, the number of women managers has increased from 29 percent to 44 percent. "Those women were always here but were not being afforded promotion opportunities. We've expanded opportunities for promotion to all our people, and we provide everyone with the resources, tools, and training they need to succeed. Also, every manager at SRS is required to have training on sexual harassment in the work place.

"We initiated a gender equity task force in SRS shortly after I arrived. When I learned SRS wasn't doing so great with ethnic issues, the gender equity task force changed to the Pluralism Council. Made up of a representative from each division and employee volunteers, the Council encourages better understanding among gender, race, and religious groups and finds ways to improve service to clients whatever their ethnic background. The Pluralism Council provides us all with a broader, more enlightened work place."

Many of the ideas Julia brought to the agency are currently underway, including statewide agency computerization, expansion of the JOBS program and development of the multi-agency Health Care for Montanans program. Her goal for the next year is to allow those projects and programs to stabilize. "I think a good manager lets her ideas filter through the agency and then gives them time to succeed."

"We have to strike a balance between uses and environmental quality, and I believe we can."

—*Karen Barclay*

KAREN BARCLAY

DIRECTOR, NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION

Karen Barclay brings a common sense approach to managing Montana's natural resources.

"How we manage our natural resources is so important to our future. We have to strike a balance between uses and environmental quality, and I believe we can."

Appointed by Governor Stephens in February of 1989, Barclay administers a 260-person agency with a $12 million annual operating budget, plus $5 million in grant funds and a $275 million bond loan authority. She is responsible for ensuring wise management, development, conservation, and use of Montana's natural resources.

Barclay enjoys the diversity of her job. "In addition to regulatory and ad-

ministrative responsibilities, we provide grants and loans for water treatment facilities, education in natural resources, and development of water, riparian areas, and natural resources. We operate a hydroelectric facility near Toston and are responsible for state-owned dams."

This is Barclay's first government job. Before joining Governor Stephens' administration, she was Vice President for Technical Projects at MSE Inc., an engineering and environmental consulting firm in Butte. She also was an environmental economist and Manager of the Socioeconomics Division of the Montana Energy Research and Development Institute (MERDI).

"My appointment as Director of DNRC was a surprise to a lot of people. They weren't used to seeing a woman in this position. But, the people of Montana have been very open to me, and have provided me room to succeed or fail. Being a woman has been an advantage in dealing with some traditional stalemates. Women grow up learning to gather people together, to listen, to mediate, to find common ground, and to compromise. I try to bring those qualities to my job."

Barclay is easing the way for other women in natural resource management through in-service training, personal encouragement, and example. The Board of Natural Resources and Conservation is chaired by a woman and a number of DNRC attorneys are female.

ZOANN ATTWOOD

DIRECTOR, MONTANA LOTTERY

Montana Lottery Director Zoann Attwood thinks she has the best job in state government.

"We always have happy customers, and we have happy staff, too. As employees we can't play the lottery ourselves, so we live vicariously through the winners. We all get excited and whistle and cheer and congratulate them. It's fun for everyone to share in the winning experience."

Appointed Lottery Director in May of 1990, Attwood oversees the operations, security, and marketing of Montana's Lottery. A big part of her job is keeping up with the gaming industry. "Lotteries are constantly looking for enhancements to make our games more fun. We never quit looking for the idea that will spark players."

Attwood has a clear direction for Montana's Lottery. "We prepared the Lottery's first two-year plan; now I'm aiming for a five-year plan that allows us to react more quickly to our market-driven products. We have to work well ahead of the current games. Our instant games are planned two years out."

Attwood bases the hiring and promotion of her 26-person staff on performance. "Position and opportunities should be based on performance, not gender. There should be no advancement based on anything but how well a person handles the work. To me, that's what gender equity on the job is about." Attwood feels fortunate to be in her position. Of the thirty-three states with Lotteries, only seven have women directors. "Nationwide, the top spots tend to be held by men."

It was because of her strong background in advertising and marketing that Governor Stephens chose Attwood to be Lottery Director. Before her appointment, she worked in the public relations department of Columbus Hospital in Great Falls and for several other advertising/marketing businesses including Gable Advertising and North Country Media Group, a video production company.

"Position and opportunities should be based on performance, not gender. There should be no advancement based on anything but how well a person handles the work."

—Zoann Attwood

KATHLEEN FLEURY

INDIAN AFFAIRS COORDINATOR

Kathleen Fleury is Montana's Indian Affairs Coordinator. She acts as liaison between tribal and urban Indians and state and local governments. She advises the state's legislative and executive branches about problems confronting the Indian population and makes recommendations for resolution. She also provides technical

"It gives me the opportunity to do something significant for Montana's Indian population... the whole population."

—Kathleen Fleury

"Women fought hard to open doors for those of us in leadership positions now. Successful women must continue paving the way for others."

—*Judy Rippingale*

assistance to Montana's tribes and state agencies on the development of minerals, water and gambling negotiations, jurisdictional issues, employment and economic development. Fleury also serves as the alternate on the 3-member Montana Board of Pardons.

Recommended by the Chairs of Montana's seven tribes, Fleury was appointed as Indian Affairs Coordinator in December, 1990. A member of the Little Shell Band of Chippewa Indians, she spent seven years as a Judicial Services Specialist for the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Kathleen, an attorney, likes her job. "It gives me the opportunity to do something significant for Montana's Indian population...the whole population. What's good for some helps us all. I also like being able to see results. Every day there's an issue resolved or a relationship improved. That's very rewarding.

"At the same time, it's hard to do all the things that need doing. There are only three of us in this office and we get calls from all over the country about anything and everything pertaining to Indians, like where the next powwow is, tribal membership, child welfare concerns... People see this as the place to come with individual problems, and we can't always help. We often have to refer them to other agencies. That can be frustrating."

Fleury feels that a woman working with the Tribes is more beneficial than not. Many tribes are matriarchal. Chippewa women are held in very high esteem and occupy the position of family decision maker and are often considered spiritual leaders. In fact, there is no gender difference in the Chippewa language.

As a role model to Indian girls, Kathleen is a natural. "I encourage them to believe in themselves and set their goals high. I truly believe gender equity is more than removing stereotypes. It's something you know and feel inside yourself."

"Women grow up learning to gather people together, to listen, to mediate, to find common ground, and to compromise."

—*Karen Barclay*

JUDY RIPPINGALE

DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR TAX POLICY DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

As a woman who worked her way up through the ranks of state government, Judy Rippingale wants to help pave the way for other women. "Women fought hard to open doors for those of us in leadership positions now. Successful women must continue paving the way for others. We need to encourage other women to build their confidence, and gain the experience and education to achieve their goals."

Women in Judy's generation didn't have many opportunities to learn essential career skills like teamwork and networking. "We learned to be technically competent; yet that accounts for only 30% of success on the job. The other 70% is working well with people. We need to recognize that socializing and building professional relationships is not wasting time."

Rippingale started working in the office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst in 1974 and worked her way up to State Legislative Fiscal Analyst in 1980. She served in that position until 1989 when she was hired by the Department of Revenue. As Deputy Director for Tax Policy, Rippingale is responsible for tax policy analysis, looking closely at revenue implications, tax structure, and impacts of proposed changes. "It's especially interesting trying to work out an agreement on a tax system with Montana's Native American tribes, which are sovereign governments. I also work on property tax policy and issues related to real estate reappraisals. Another part of my job is to hear tax disputes."

As a Certified Public Accountant with nearly twenty years of state government experience, Judy knows how the state's financial system works and understands how to turn an idea into reality. "I start by analyzing policy strengths and weaknesses and communicating with decision makers. Then I use input from others to continuously improve the idea and end up with a result that will work. I enjoy de-

veloping policy that really makes a difference for the state."

Rippingale doesn't have as much direct responsibility for hiring as she did as Legislative Fiscal Analyst. "When I started, the ratio of professional women to men was very low. When I left, it was about even. To me, gender equity means equal opportunity to perform your job, to be promoted, and to be recognized for your contributions in the work place. I think my emphasis on hiring and promoting the best qualified people put women in better-paying, more visible jobs."

SANDRA GUEDES

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Sandra Guedes' job as Director of Tourism for the state of Montana requires balancing marketing, infrastructure, and conservation. "Effectively promoting Montana means using well focused and creative marketing to give us the best results for our investment. But we also have to address infrastructure needs to accommodate increased numbers of visitors. And we have to make sure those amenities are developed in harmony with our natural resources, which are the foundation of Montana's tourism industry."

Guedes, who has headed the Tourism program since the fall of 1989, has a special ability to maintain creativity while operating within the constraints of government bureaucracy. "We have to blend creativity with satisfying state agency rules, regulations, and requirements that don't apply to the private sector. That can be quite a challenge."

Montana's Tourism efforts are funded solely by Montana's 4% bed tax. This year's budget is expected to reach $5.8 million. With 19 staff and numerous areas of responsibility, the Tourism program relies on an advertising agency, a publishing firm, a telemarketing system, and the literature assembly industry to help accomplish its work.

Guedes, a native Brazilian who has travelled extensively, sees her language skills and keen interest in international relations as closely related to her job. "Understanding other languages and cultures transforms people in a subtle but powerful way. You begin to think: how would someone from Germany or California perceive that? I believe that's an important perspective when we promote Montana to Taiwan, Japan, Germany, the United Kingdom, and France, as well as Canada and the United States."

Historically the Tourism program has employed far more women than men. Guedes says she has placed more women in positions of responsibility. "The consideration is always who is the best person for the job. Some people think of gender equity as making sure there are as many women as men. To me, gender equity means looking beyond stereotypes and seeing a person's real strengths and abilities. When you do that, you automatically place women in a better position to compete."

"Equity is looking beyond stereotypes and seeing a person's real strengths and abilities."

—Sandra Guedes

TWO FIRSTS ON MONTANA'S BOARDS

Janice Rehberg serves as the first woman chair of the Board of Natural Resources and Conservation. Janice, a rancher and attorney with the firm of Crowley, Haughey, Hanson, Toole, and Dietrich in Billings, was appointed Board Chair in January, 1991. She was the Board Attorney for two years prior to her appointment and has dealt at length with natural resource issues in her practice.

Elaine Allestad operates a three-generation sheep/cattle ranch near Big Timber, Montana, and is the first woman appointed to Montana's Fish and Game Commission. A County Commissioner for Sweet Grass County since 1987 and an avid hunter, Elaine is acutely interested in park access and game ranges. A member of the Land Committee of the Montana Woolgrowers and the National American Sheep Industry, she provides the Commission with a good understanding of range conditions and management for both livestock and wildlife.

These are just a few of the women leaders serving in Montana state government. There are many more and the numbers are growing each year.

If you are interested in public service, no matter what your gender, it's important that you understand state laws pertaining to employment and gender equity. It's also important to know how to apply for appointment to the state's many public boards and commissions.

HOW TO BE CONSIDERED FOR AN APPOINTED POSITION

Vacancies on appointed boards and commissions are posted in the Capitol Building and are published in the Montana Administrative Register whenever an opening occurs. The Governor encourages interested Montanans to apply for consideration by sending a letter of interest and resume to:

Marge Hannah, Governor's Office, Capitol Station, Helena, MT 59620

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY & GENDER EQUITY LAWS

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that all persons be given equal opportunity in employment regardless of their sex, race, national origin, religion or age. Montana's Human Rights Act and Governmental Code of Fair Practices include the same protection as Title VII, and add marital status, handicap, and political beliefs as protected categories. Montana's Executive Order 24-81 commits the executive branch of state government to the Equal Opportunity Program.

In 1991, Governor Stephens signed into law an act directing all appointive boards, commissions, committees, and councils of state government to take positive action to attain gender balance and proportional representation of minority residents to the greatest extent possible.

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